

Hunting and Trapping

This area offers excellent waterfowl hunting and good deer and turkey hunting. Rabbit, dove, and quail hunting are found on limited portions of the area. Hunting is allowed under statewide regulations with the following exceptions:

- Non-toxic shot is required for all hunting with a shotgun. Possession of lead shot is prohibited.
- Furbearer trapping is permitted by special use permit only.

Waterfowl Hunting is permitted on the area under the following regulations:

- In Unit 1 and Unit 2, from Oct. 15 to Feb. 15 only waterfowl hunting is permitted in portions that are identified as “Waterfowl Hunting Only.” During Middle Zone Duck Season, these units are only open to those hunters who receive a waterfowl hunting tag allocated during a daily drawing which is held approximately 2 hours prior to local shooting time. Waterfowl hunting is closed on Dec. 25 in the “Waterfowl Hunting Only” areas.
- All other waterfowl hunters must self-register prior to hunting. This includes Unit 1 and Unit 2 waterfowl hunters hunting outside the dates of the Middle Zone Duck Season and all waterfowl hunters in Units 3 and 4. To self-register, hunters must fill out and deposit the top portion of the card, possess the bottom portion while hunting, record harvest at the end of the hunt and drop off the bottom portion in any of the drop boxes located at the area headquarters in Unit 1, Unit 3, or Unit 4.
- In Unit 3 and Unit 4, decoys and blinds may not be left unattended.

Deer hunting is permitted on the area under the following regulations:

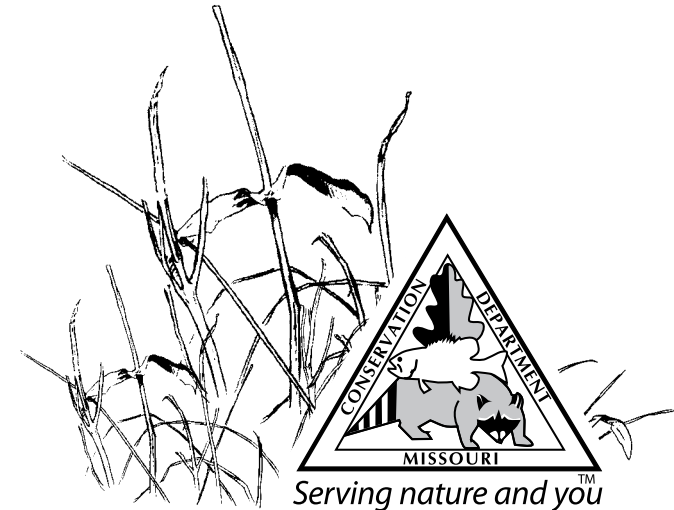
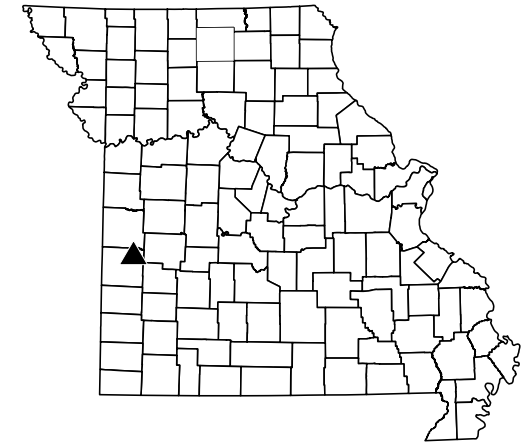
- Deer and turkey regulations are subject to annual changes. Refer to Spring Turkey or Fall Deer and Turkey booklets for current regulations.
- Only portable tree stands are allowed and only from September 1 through January 31 on areas where deer hunting is allowed, by special use permit, or except as otherwise authorized. Unattended stands must be plainly labeled on a durable material with the full name and address, or Conservation Number, of the owner and be removed from the area before February 1. Use of nails, screw-in steps, and any material or method that would damage the tree is prohibited.

For local information, contact:
Missouri Department of Conservation
4347 S. 1625 Road
Rich Hill, MO 64779
(417) 395-2341 or (417) 876-5226

Additional area information is posted on bulletin boards located in parking areas and area office.

August A. Busch, Jr. Memorial Wetlands
at **Four Rivers**

CONSERVATION AREA



6/2021

(Regulations are from the Wildlife Code of Missouri and selected statutes of the State of Missouri. Special area regulations are in Chapter 11 of the Wildlife Code. A free printed copy of the Wildlife Code, which lists most area regulations, is available from the Conservation Department. Chapter 11 in its entirety is available at www.sos.mo.gov/adrules/csr/current/3csr/3csr.asp.) Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Missouri Department of Conservation is available to all individuals without regard to their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. Questions should be directed to the Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, (573) 751-4115 (voice) or 800-735-2966 (TTY), or to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Federal Assistance, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop: MBSP-4020, Arlington, VA 22203.

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

August A. Busch, Jr. Memorial Wetlands at Four Rivers Conservation Area

The August A. Busch, Jr. Memorial Wetlands at Four Rivers Conservation Area is largely wetlands and totals 13,929 acres. The area has over 5,300 acres of managed wetlands and 21 miles of stream frontage. There are several large tracts of bottom-land forest along with wet prairies, both declining habitats. Over 7,000 acres of the area has been enrolled in the Wetland Reserve Program.

Four Rivers is primarily managed for a suite of wetland wildlife species and provides habitat to thousands of waterfowl each year. Considered an Important Bird Area by Audubon Missouri, over 180 species of birds have been recorded. There is also a managed waterfowl hunting program along with “open hunting” areas that provide waterfowl hunting opportunity for several thousand hunters annually.

There are numerous features and facilities throughout the area including the Horton Bottoms Natural Area, a 142 acre lake, a 20 acre lake, three strip pits, four streams, two boat ramps (1 lake, 1 stream), a disabled-user hunting blind, and a boardwalk and viewing platform.

A portion of this area was acquired, developed, and is managed in part through funding derived from the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act. Additional partners involved in acquisitions, developments, or management projects include the Missouri Department of Conservation, Natural Resources Conservation Service (Wetland Reserve Program), Ducks Unlimited, North American Wetlands Conservation Council, and the Busch Family.

Recreational Opportunities

Bird Watching - Fishing – Hunting – Outdoor Photography – Wildlife Viewing

Conservation Areas are closed from 10:00 pm to 4:00 am except for authorized camping, fishing and hunting activities.

- No fireworks.
- No open fires.
- Dogs must be leashed when not being used for hunting or training purposes.
- Nuts, berries, fruits, edible wild greens and mushrooms may be taken only for personal use. Cutting or removing other vegetation is prohibited, except temporary blinds may be constructed on-site from willows (Salicaceae) and non-woody vegetation.
- On areas designated as Missouri Natural Areas, taking edible wild greens is prohibited.
- Vehicle use is restricted to graveled roadways and parking areas open to the public.
- Horseback riding is permitted only on graveled roads and parking areas open to vehicles.
- Bicycle riding is only permitted on graveled roads and parking areas open to vehicles.
- Primitive camping is permitted only in spots designated on the area map. Campers are limited to 14 consecutive days in a 30-day period and no more than 30 days in a calendar year. Groups of 10 or more campers need a Special Use Permit.
- Target shooting is only permitted for youth activities with a Special Use Permit.
- Swimming, scuba diving, water skiing, sailboarding, caving and rappelling is prohibited.
- Trail and game cameras are prohibited.

Fishing and Boating

The area's rivers, 142 acre lake, and three strip pits offer a variety of fishing opportunities. There is a seasonal boat ramp on Unit 1 located on the Marmaton River.

The boat ramp is closed during wetland pumping activities, extreme flooding, and also from the start of youth waterfowl season to the end of duck season.

On impounded waters, fishing and frogging are allowed under the following special regulations:

- Fish may be taken only by pole and line and not more than 3 poles may be used by any one person except as stated below.
- Carp, Buffalo, suckers, and gar may be taken by Atlatl, gig, bow, or crossbow during statewide seasons.
- Daily limit is six (6) black bass, 30 crappie, four (4) catfish (channel, blue or flathead) in the aggregate. All other fish are under statewide limits, but may not exceed 20 in the aggregate.
- All black bass between 12 and 15 inches must be released immediately after being caught.
- No more than four (4) of any combination of white, yellow, striped, or hybrid bass may exceed 18”.
- Seining or trapping live bait, including tadpoles, is prohibited on lakes and ponds.
- Gizzard shad may be taken from lakes and ponds by dip net or throw net.
- Fishing permitted on Unit 1 Reservoir February 1 to October 14.
- Boats, including sailboats, may be used on lakes and ponds designated as open to boats. Boats may not be left unattended overnight.
- Outboard motors in excess of 10 horsepower must be operated at slow, no-wake speed.
- Only electric motors may be used on lakes and ponds under 70 acres.
- Use of houseboats and personal water craft is prohibited.